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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6350

June 28, 2001

The Honorable Spencer Abraham
Secretary of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Thank you very much for inviting me to attend the Department of Energy's Second Annual Small Business Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, last week. I regret my schedule made it impossible for me to attend. However, I am glad a member of my staff was able to attend and share some thoughts concerning legislation and the Federal small business program.

The Department of Energy has taken a number of aggressive steps to increase small business opportunity in recent years, and this successful conference is yet another example. Although many conferences simply repeat the same speakers and presentations year after year, the Energy conference had particularly valuable elements that other agencies would do well to imitate. Requiring large business exhibitors to post at least one procurement opportunity as part of their exhibit is a creative idea that ensures attendees leave the conference with a potential business opportunity. Also, certifying new HUBZone small businesses on-site helps both the firms and the Department of Energy, by expanding your competitive vendor base.

Your continued commitment to small business contracting is no surprise, of course. I appreciated the opportunity to work with you as a member of the Senate Small Business Committee, and I look forward to continued progress on small business issues during your tenure as Secretary of Energy. Thank you again and congratulations on a successful conference.

Sincerely,



Christopher S. Bond
Ranking Member